

Mississippi PROFILE

A Publication of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health

WINTER 2016

VIDEO INTRODUCTIONS AIDING IN TRANSITION TO THE COMMUNITY

A new tool in use at South Mississippi Regional Center (SMRC) has been aiding in the successful transition of clients to their communities.

Staff at SMRC began using Video Care Plans (VCPs) last year to introduce their clients to the new people and places they encounter when transitioning to new communities. These plans serve in bridging the gap that exists any time a person moves to a new place with new people. They share not just information helpful in providing care and services, but a true introduction to each person – favorite activities, their likes and dislikes, even favorite songs.

The team at SMRC began using these plans, which they now simply call video introductions, in July of 2015, and have since produced more than a dozen of them. The team there produces the video in-house and even has their own policy for securing the videos to make sure they are HIPAA-compliant.

A Transition Coordinator spends time getting to know the people preparing for the transition and creates comprehensive profiles that are used to introduce them to their new caregivers. While such a comprehensive profile may be overwhelming for many people, the video introduction is an effective way of condensing much of that information, and it does it in a way that is dynamic and personal.

It starts by summarizing much of the information gathered by the Transition Coordinator into a PowerPoint presentation. Included throughout the presentation slides are pictures of the person who is transitioning. These pictures may show them using any adaptive equipment they require or taking part in some of their favorite activities.

Over all of that is the soundtrack to the video – the meaningful song selected specifically by or for the person. That song won't be used for any other video introduction, so it helps reinforce the uniqueness of each one. Throughout the whole process, the person transitioning plays a vital role, picking out the photos to use, choosing what information to include, and also choosing what to leave out.

Staff members viewing the final video have expressed how much they enjoy learning about the new person. They are able to have a better understanding about the person to whom they will be providing services and supports.

Video introductions are short enough to convey important information without losing the interest of the staff watching, which can't always be said of the lengthy written documents they're asked to review. They provide a method to successfully communicate information to the receiving staff in a meaningful way that will make an impression.

It made such an impression that at least one other DMH program has embraced the idea for itself. Boswell Regional Center (BRC) began creating video introductions earlier this year as well. Steven Allen, Director of BRC, first saw the videos last fall when SMRC showcased theirs at the annual Mental Health/Intellectual and Developmental Disability Conference.

"What stood out to me was that it made me feel as though I knew the person, although we had never met, and would be comfortable talking and working with him," Allen said. "I knew right away it would be something that everyone at BRC would want to invest in."

The team at BRC is creating work very similar to what SMRC has done, allowing the people they serve to help create the finished product. They pick the songs, colors, and pictures that are used in the videos.

"We finished our first one in the middle of January and have heard nothing but praise," Allen said. "We are in the process of getting every unit / team involved in the process for the people transitioning to other programs and providers."

"This was one of those times you go to a conference and bring something back that EVERYONE loves. Thanks to the staff at SMRC for leading the way."

Supporting a *better* tomorrow...TODAY!



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The Mississippi Profile is devoted to providing the public with information about services provided or administered by the Mississippi Department of Mental Health. It also strives to increase public awareness and knowledge about mental illness, intellectual/developmental disabilities, substance use, and Alzheimer's disease and other dementia to improve health and quality of life.

This publication is free of charge to persons interested in mental health, intellectual and developmental disabilities, substance use, Alzheimer's disease and other dementia, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, or the individuals it serves. It is the policy of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health to comply with federal and state laws assuring equal opportunities of employment and services.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to another issue of Mississippi Profile, the quarterly newsletter from the Department of Mental Health. We have a lot of exciting things in this issue, and I'm thankful for the opportunity to share them with you. After you have read the good news we have, please feel free to pass this newsletter along and share it with others so we can continue to spread the word about the strides that are being made in Mississippi's public mental health system.



Several initiatives have been undertaken or expanded in recent months to aid in the transition of people we serve to the communities of their choice. One of those is the Specialized Planning, Options to Transition Team, or SPOTT. This team is a partnership between staff members here at DMH, other state agencies, and other providers who work together and find service options for people who have experienced difficulty in staying in recovery. Everyone deserves to stay in their own homes and communities, so a group of people working to find the ways to make that possible is great news. We are thankful to have dedicated partners like The Arc of Mississippi, who are leading the way in this partnership.

Another exciting thing to share comes out of South Mississippi Regional Center, which has started creating video introductions for the people they're serving. These videos aid in these clients' transitions, offering the new caregivers a quick way to get to know them and the best ways they can support them in their new environments. It was truly great to hear about the difference this initiative has made, and the ways other DMH programs are using it.

We have several other stories to share in this issue, so please continue to read, and thank you to all of our supporters, partners, and employees who make this possible.

Sincerely,

Diana S. Mikula,
Executive Director

Renee Brett named Director of the Bureau of Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities



Renee Brett has been named Director of the Bureau of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities for the Department of Mental Health (DMH).

Brett joins the DMH Central Office from Ellisville State School, where she previously served as Director of that DMH program. As Director of Ellisville State School (ESS), she was directly responsible for the overall operation of that program, which serves 500 individuals on its main campus in addition to hundreds more in community-based programs. She was assistant director of ESS prior to being named director in 2009.

She spent much of her career at ESS, serving in a variety of roles there. Her duties there have included: Director of Interdisciplinary Teams, Nursing Home Administrator, Director of the Adult Activities Center, Music Therapist, and more. She is known in DMH as being completely dedicated to the clients receiving services and ensuring they and their families are able to make choices that enable them to lead the lives they wish to lead. She is a Licensed DMH

Administrator, an Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Therapist, and a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator.

In October, she was recognized by mental health professionals from throughout the state with the Albert Randel Hendrix Memorial Leadership Award, which is presented each year to a Mississippian who has demonstrated exemplary leadership in the field of mental health and/or intellectual and developmental disability services. During her career, Brett has also served with numerous professional organizations, including the Mississippi Chapter of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Right to Succeed, Inc.

“Renee is known throughout our state as someone who provides the highest level of commitment to the people she serves,” DMH Executive Director Diana Mikula said. “She has served in a variety of roles and in a variety of programs, but she has always provided excellent leadership. We are very happy to welcome her in her new role as Director of the Bureau of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities with the Department of Mental Health.”

Rinsey McSwain named Director of Ellisville State School

The Mississippi Board of Mental Health recently appointed Rinsey Evans McSwain as the Director of Ellisville State School. McSwain has been with Ellisville State School for 27 years and has served as the Assistant Director since 2006.

Prior to being chosen assistant director, she served in a variety of roles, including Recreation Therapist, Program Director and the Director of Units on the main campus. McSwain received a bachelor's degree in recreation from the University of Southern Mississippi and a master's degree in education from William Carey University. She holds numerous certifications and has participated in the State Executive Development Institute through the Stennis Institute of Government.

She was also a member of Leadership Jones County and, in 2013, was the recipient of the Paul D. Cotten Leadership Award from the Mississippi Chapter of the American Association for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities. McSwain has been an integral part of service provision at Ellisville State School, promoting community integration and



best practices in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities. She stated that she has had the opportunity to work with some of the best administrators within the Department of Mental Health and her experiences have been invaluable in her development as Assistant Director.

“I want to continue to strive for excellence in service for the people we are serving,” she said, “and ensure that we are in line with the vision of the Department of Mental Health in providing appropriate services.”

“I have a genuine interest in the future of Ellisville State School and the people we serve,” she continued. “I support the mission of Ellisville State School and believe that together everyone achieves more.”

McSwain is a native of Laurel. She is active in her community and volunteers with church outreach ministries. In her new role as ESS director, McSwain replaces former Director, Renée Brett, who left ESS to take a position with the Mississippi Department of Mental Health as the Director of the Bureau of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

SPOTT TEAM Providing Person-Centered Services in a True Collaboration

Not everyone who needs mental health services can fit into a program that is exactly, tailor-made for them, but one option at the Department of Mental Health is working to connect each person with all of the individual services they need, no matter where they are.

The Specialized Planning, Options to Transition Team, or SPOTT, has been developed over the past two years to help provide a person-centered, recovery-oriented system of care for all Mississippians in need of mental health services. Specifically, it has been developed to support people who have required treatment in inpatient programs on multiple occasions, linking them with additional services in the community to help them remain successful in their recovery.

It grew out of services offered through The Arc of Mississippi, and was associated with services for intellectual and developmental disabilities, but has since grown to include mental health services. Members of the SPOTT team come from a variety of backgrounds and agencies. There are private providers, but also state agencies such as the Division of Medicaid, the Department of Human Services, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

Matt Nalker, Executive Director of The Arc of Mississippi, recently gave a presentation about SPOTT to a group of Department of Mental Health employees.

"I know that everyone in this room has the same thing in common. We all like to help people. We got into this business because we care deeply about the people we serve," Nalker said. "This SPOTT team is a collaboration to help us better provide services to people in need."

"Our main goal is to help people with a history of recidivism," Nalker said. "We don't silo people or categorize people. This is really about their need for support, wherever those referrals come from."

Many referrals may come from calls made by family members to the DMH Helpline in the Office of Consumer Support (OCS), but they also come to OCS from private providers, local hospitals, or other concerned citizens. Group members meet every two weeks to oversee the cases that have been referred. It is a true collaborative effort, with members committed to providing help when they can, and also being in a position to ask others for help when they need their partners' services.

"Another unique part of our group is that the SPOTT team takes action at the meeting," Nalker said. "We take action at that table. Somebody may step out of the room to make a call to set up a face-to-face interaction, so that by the next meeting, you will have done a discovery meeting with the person in need of support or the person who knows them best."

Moving forward and making sure to gather that information themselves, quickly, and not just relying on all the information in a person's files has been very advantageous for the team. It not only provides them with the accurate information they need, but has at times offered a much-needed update or even correct some data that was mistaken in the first place.

The team has served more than 200 people over the past two years, with the majority of those including face-to-face interaction with the person in need or their representatives, Nalker said. They currently have



more than 20 active cases and more than 20 on follow along.

The follow along cases are ones where the team has identified a service that was requested, and has made a connection, but the services haven't been in place long enough to determine if they will remain successful.

The SPOTT team is currently operating in the Central Mississippi area, but members have traveled outside that area to assist in setting up services where they were needed. The hope is to get teams set up and operating throughout the state, to provide the same resource to people in need no matter where they live.

"It's been a blessing for our organization," Nalker said. "All of us have a lot of different opportunities in the way we use our time, and this is the best use of my time that I have. I continue to be challenged by it, and it continues to be a worthwhile use of our time."

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH HOSTS IDD DAY AT CAPITOL APRIL 6, 2016

Join the Mississippi Department of Mental Health in celebrating Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Awareness Month at the annual IDD “Day at the Capitol” on April 6, 2016 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the State Capitol.

The goal of the event is to increase the public’s knowledge and awareness of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and how they participate and contribute to their communities. Service providers will be available at the event to provide additional information.

“We have been working to build a statewide system that promotes and encourages person-centered services and supports, and I encourage all Mississippians to learn more about this,” DMH Executive Director Diana Mikula said.

“We want to support a better tomorrow for individuals with an intellectual or developmental disability, and our supporters and partners in the community are helping us make great strides in realizing that vision each and every day.”

Intellectual and developmental disabilities cover a broad range of often misunderstood characteristics. An intellectual disability is characterized by limitations in intellectual functioning and challenges in a variety of everyday social and practical skills. A developmental disability is attributed to a cognitive or physical impairment that results in the need for supports in areas such as personal care, communication, and independent living.

More than 41,000 fellow Mississippians are affected by intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Pictured above: Participants gather in the rotunda in a previous year’s recognition of IDD Day at the Capitol.



9TH ANNUAL MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL FOR ADDICTION PROFESSIONALS



save the date!

MONDAY, MAY 9 - THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2016
LAKE TERRACE CONVENTION CENTER, HATTIESBURG, MS

Who should attend?

Treatment Professionals & Service Providers, Educators, Nurses, Social Workers, Prevention Professionals, Law Enforcement, MH Therapists, Parents, Public Health Professionals, Peer Support Specialists, Students and Concerned Citizens

For more information, visit www.theMSSchool.ms.gov
or contact the Department of Mental Health at **1.877.210.8513**
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HOSTED BY: Mississippi Department of Mental Health,
Bureau of Alcohol & Drug Services

DMH 2016 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

A Message from DMH Executive Director Diana Mikula

Over the past several years, Mississippi has had great success in expanding the availability of community-based mental health services throughout the state. This has been thanks to the support of the Mississippi Legislature, which in Fiscal Year 2014 granted the Department of Mental Health (DMH) a \$10 million appropriation dedicated for the expansion of community services. In Fiscal Year 2015, the Legislature continued to fund that same appropriation along with an additional \$6.1 million. This year, Fiscal Year 2016, the Legislature continued to fund that same amount of \$16.1 million.

Of course, these programs would not be possible if not for the hard work and dedication of the employees who have been an essential part of this expansion.

I would like to share some of their successes with you, as well as what some of our priorities will be in this year's legislative session.

The funding granted by the Legislature and the commitment of employees in our public mental health system – composed of DMH programs, Community Mental Health Centers and DMH Certified Providers – lets the state offer an array of services that allows people to remain in their homes and communities while still getting the help they need. I can't tell you how grateful I am to be working with all of our DMH employees and our partners in the community who are working to bring these services to those in need.

The services include Programs of Assertive Community Treatment (PACT) Teams, which are often referred to as hospitals without walls. They bring a multidisciplinary team together to treat people in their own homes and communities, helping those who have experienced difficulty remaining in recovery from mental illness while outside of an inpatient setting. There are now eight PACT

teams in Mississippi.

Mobile Crisis Response Teams are now available in each of the 14 Community Mental Health Centers in Mississippi. These teams provide community-based crisis services that deliver behavioral health assessments and stabilization at the location of the person who is experiencing the crisis. In FY 2015, the teams made 19,660 total contacts, 9,701 of which were face-to-face interactions, and 929 interactions in conjunction with law enforcement.

For people with intellectual or developmental disabilities, the ID/DD Waiver has been increased with an additional 844 slots since 2012. The ID/DD

Waiver provides personalized supports that allow people to live successfully in their homes, providing people with activities such as supported

meaningful employment, supervised living and occupational, physical, speech or language therapy. At the end of FY15, there were 2,296 people receiving services through the ID/DD Waiver.

In the 2016 Legislative Session, DMH will also request realignment in the salaries of our Direct Care staff. These employees are the frontline staff members who assist and support the people in our programs every day. They have extensive training to develop their behavior management and crisis intervention skills. They carry a significant responsibility in maintaining a safe and therapeutic environment that facilitates recovery and resiliency.

Despite that, the current start salary for a Direct Care Worker Trainee is only \$15,898 a year. Once they move past the trainee status, their salary is \$17,408. While these employees are compassionate professionals who find great satisfaction in their work, many simply cannot support themselves and their families on those salaries. The vast majority work at least two jobs, and the State

The one thing all people living with a mental illness or an intellectual/developmental disability have in common is that they deserve the best services and supports we can give them.

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Personnel Board tells us that these positions carry the highest rates of turnover in our Mississippi State government. We want to continue to be able to employ people with exemplary skills and dedication, and we will ask the Legislature for a realignment of at least \$2,300 a year in their salaries to allow us to do that.

The one thing all people living with a mental illness or an intellectual/developmental disability have in common is that they deserve the best services and supports we can give them. Our expansion of community-based services ensures we have a continuum of care. I know that by working together, we can all help create a better tomorrow for all Mississippians.

DMH Partners with Mental Health Association of South Mississippi for WRAP

The Mental Health Association of South Mississippi (MHASM) and the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) partnered to offer Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) trainings at the three DMH Behavioral Health Programs during the second quarter of FY16.

In the FY16 – FY18 DMH Strategic Plan, the agency included an objective to utilize WRAP at three of the Behavioral Health Programs by the end of FY16 and expand to the other three programs in FY17. Each program will employ Certified Peer Support Specialists to conduct WRAPs as part of the transition process, providing people with an optional self-directed wellness tool upon discharge. In addition, CMHCs in those catchment areas will be educated on the use of WRAP, an evidence-based program, and integration of WRAP into supporting self-directed recovery.

These three trainings were the first step in a strategy to help reduce readmissions to DMH programs and provide a more seamless transition to the community. In addition, MHASM is currently working to provide WRAP Facilitator Seminar II training to the programs and for Peer Bridgers to help DMH meet another objective in the FY16 – FY18 DMH Strategic Plan.

North Mississippi State Hospital, Communicare, LifeCore, and Timber Hills Mental Health Services are part of the Peer Bridger Pilot Project, which is also an objective in the DMH Strategic Plan. The purpose is to improve the transition process and decrease the number of readmissions by employing Peer Bridgers. By utilizing this initiative, Mississippi will decrease individuals' need for readmissions and increase the number of individuals who attend follow-up appointments by offering intensive peer support services through the use of Peer Bridgers.

The services offered by Peer Bridgers will help individuals transition back into their communities and avert future potential crisis by utilizing WRAP along with Personal Outcome Measures (POM), Whole Health Action Management (WHAM) and Community Asset Mapping.



Certified Peer Support Specialist Amanda Clement facilitates a WRAP class at South Mississippi State Hospital.

The three WRAP trainings held in the second quarter of FY 16 were:

- October 1-2, 2015 at North Mississippi State Hospital with 15 attendees
- October 22-23, 2015 at SSMH with 18 attendees, including eight from local CMHCs
- November 12-13, 2015 at CMRC with 31 attendees, including 11 from local CMHCs

“We were happy to host this training and would love to host another one when there is an opportunity,” said South Mississippi State Hospital Director Clint Ashley.

“We believe the training was beneficial and that WRAP is another step toward improving the services we offer the people of our area and this state.”

Kim Cooper, a Certified Mental Health Therapist at Central Mississippi Residential Center, said she found the training very beneficial and was interested in learning how to become a trainer for the CMRC campus.

“It is wonderful to have an actual written plan where the individual is the author. I have shared this plan with my close friends and family because I know it works. I am constantly encouraging individuals who have been introduced to WRAP at CMRC to continue to work on their WRAPs to gain and maintain a whole and healthy life,” she said.

ELLISVILLE STATE SCHOOL OPENS BRIGHT ENVISIONS

Ellisville State School (ESS) now has another program in place to equip people with some of the skills needed to make a successful transition into the community. In early November, ESS opened Bright Envisions, a day service and pre-vocational center patterned after a similar program in Hattiesburg.

Misty Smith, Bright Envisions' program director, said she worked with the ESS transition team to establish the program after learning what people do once they leave ESS and transition into the community. Most of them partake of day services and/or seek employment in the community.

"We have people who are not prepared for that (working in the community)," said Smith.

The objective of Bright Envisions is to provide a service to help prepare people to make the transition into the community. Located in the former Employment Center 2 Building (Main Street) on campus, Bright Envisions services are designed to help people learn to live and work in their communities as independently as possible, while still receiving the support they need to make successful transitions.

Smith accompanied ESS Transition Coordinator Rachel "Sissy" Ingram on several trips to view facilities that would serve the people of ESS once they moved into the community. She was impressed by what she saw at day services facilities in Hattiesburg and Collins and saw a need for something similar at ESS. Smith, Ingram and others discussed the matter and developed a plan to present to ESS administration.



The idea was well-received and granted approval. Smith and her staff then began painting and renovating the old site to make it warm and inviting for participants. Bright Envisions has five main staffers – Smith, C. J. Townsend, Felicia Keys, Angie Aldridge and Sandy Jones. Margie Wright works part-time and several others, including Markus Pollard, Urisha King, Jack Bolton, and Kerri Russell are helping with the renovations and decorations.

Townsend, who teaches arts and crafts to program participants, refurbished some old ESS furniture to use in the kitchen and dining area and other rooms in the building. Although Bright Envisions is up and running, Smith said renovations on the building are still in progress.

“We are taking one step at a time,” explained Smith. “Since we are doing everything ourselves, it may take a little longer.”

Bright Envisions currently has its welcome center, kitchen and dining area, sensory work area, creativity center, and laundry area in place. Future plans include a spa area, computer area, media room, and a fitness area.

Five days a week, participants arrive at Bright Envisions in the morning and spend a half day working and participating in activities. The transition team selects program participants who

will continue in the program until they make the transition into the community or until the transition team deems otherwise. Participants spend time alternating between arts and crafts and developing work-related skills.

Transitioning into the community is a big step. We want to provide them a place they can get out and socialize.

“We have 12 people right now,” said Smith. “We have had two to leave already.”

“Transitioning into the community is a big step. We want to provide them a place they can get out and socialize. Even if they can’t speak, they can learn how to be around people and experience the outside (community).”

Smith said participants will also learn to use basic items such as a microwave, crock pot, convection oven and coffee maker. They will also learn to wash and iron their clothes, clean, and set the table.

Participation is on a voluntary basis. If people come in and decide they do not want to participate, they can spend time in the sensory room or relaxation area.

Bright Envisions’ overall objective is to help people acquire the skills needed to make a successful transition into the community or a home setting.

NAMI MISSISSIPPI 'STEPS UP' IN 2016 DAY AT THE CAPITOL

The Mississippi Chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) invited citizens of Mississippi to become an advocate on behalf of those living with severe mental illnesses and their families on Tuesday, February 9, 2016 with a rally on the steps of the State Capitol.

The theme for this year's Day at the Capitol was "Stepping Up," and several dozen people responded to the call to "step up" and support people and families living with mental illness. Afterwards, participants gathered in the first floor rotunda, giving them a chance to meet and greet legislators who were in the Capitol.

During the rally on the steps, Jackson Mayor Tony Yarper presented NAMI Mississippi Director Tameka Tobias-Smith with a resolution recognizing the importance of providing mental health services and diverting those in need from jail – which is the message behind this year's theme for NAMI's Day at the Capitol.

"Stepping Up" is a national initiative to address the critical problem of the two million Americans with mental illness who each year land behind bars for minor crimes connected with untreated mental health or substance use conditions. Police who respond to a mental health crisis often do not have the training or the resources available to divert someone in need of services away from jail, yet few jails are equipped to treat serious mental illness or substance use.

In an effort to reduce the number of incarcerations related to a person's behavior due to symptoms of mental illness, the



Jackson Mayor Tony Yarper presents NAMI Mississippi Director Tameka Tobias-Smith with a resolution at the annual NAMI Day at the Capitol.

Mayor Yarper spoke at the rally, along with Mental Health Crisis Therapist Tiffany Anderson, Pastor Tonya Ware and Latasha Willis, who shared her story of recovery from mental illness.

Department of Mental Health has funded Mobile Crisis Response Teams and Crisis Intervention Training throughout the state. Each of the 14 regional CMHCs now has a Mobile Crisis Response Team, and the East Mississippi Crisis Intervention Team has led Crisis Intervention Training for law enforcement from throughout the state.

Without appropriate treatment, these inmates may possibly act out and have charges added or spend more time in jail, and often don't get services upon release. They are more likely to be unemployed, homeless, use costly emergency services and get re-arrested in the future. The Council of State Governments Justice Center, National Association of Counties and the American Psychiatric Foundation are working with county, state and community stakeholders to build on existing progress and meet local needs. NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, brings the voice of individuals and families affected by mental illness to the table.

For more information about NAMI Mississippi, contact them at (601) 899-9058 or at stateoffice@namims.org. You can also visit them on the web at www.namims.org.